

What is the matter with Rider Haggard? Is he a man without imagination, or a man without humor? We know what the irreverent would call him, but he is not really a chucklehead; "She" and "King Solomon's Mines" are clever books.

(Expressly for the Review.)

How Germany Moves.

IS THE EMPEROR A SINGLE TAXER?

By A. Pohlman.

The "Bund Deutscher Bodenreformer" has taken a somewhat different development than the similar organizations in the New World and England. Though based on the principles of Henry George, the German League does not advocate single tax pure and simple, nor does it follow the source of the English Land Nationalization Society. Recognizing that, especially in a country like ours, with ancient, deeply rooted customs, no theory, however perfect, can be carried out in its purity, and that to make headway against the innumerable prejudices and interests opposing any change, we believe the proper course to follow is to show the way of putting our principles into practice on all economic questions turning up in course of time and absorbing the public interest.

Thus, when some scandalous grants were made in our African colonies, the bund raised its voice and soon had public opinion on its side, so much so that the Colonial Secretary, who made these grants, had to retire.

The bund took up the protection of the workmen in the building trades who suffer from fictitious mortgage entries, closely connected with the land question, and it tried to show the suffering farmers that, instead of clamoring for protective duties, they ought to turn their attention to the mortgages which weigh them down, and to the artificially increased valuation of their estates.

When the Prussian Government came forward with its great canal scheme, it was unable to overcome the opposition of the Diet. The bund showed that by taxing the unearned increment created by the construction of the canal, and likewise of the adjoining road and iron mines, the canal might be turned from a doubtful financial undertaking to a very successful one.

Wherever committees are appointed to investigate the fearful calamity of overcrowding in our large cities, the bund steps in to show that there can be no other solution than a thorough reform of the laws regulating the possession of land, and when it is in this way brought home to the people they begin to understand what our principles mean.

A splendid opportunity for propagating our ideas arose when two large Prussian Mortgage Banks stopped payment. Some time back these kind of banks had asked the government permission to grant loans and issue mortgage bonds on building sites, instead of house property only as before, and then our bund raised its voice and pointed out that a new stimulus would be given to the already flourishing speculation in ground values, and that a collapse was sure to follow. This permission was granted by both houses of the Prussian Diet. Our interference was ridiculed by the whole financial press, but only a few years elapsed to prove the correctness of our arguments.

The recent coal crisis, too, offered a splendid field for agitation, showing how the whole country was taxed by a small ring of mine owners. It was wonderful to see how quickly people grasped the idea that these mines ought by right to be the property of the nation, or contribute at least a proper share from their enormous profits to the public exchequer.

Acting thus, *i. e.*, holding meetings on all such questions the moment popular feeling is aroused, or drafting petitions to Parliament, the Bodenreform movement in Germany has, under the most able and untiring leadership of Mr. Adolph Damaschke, taken a great impetus.

Members of all political parties have joined in its great work of reform, and most prominent collegemen like Adolph Wagner, professor of political economy of the University of Berlin, and Rudolf Lohm, professor of law of the University of Leipzig, have joined the ranks.

Besides that, we have the satisfaction that of all governments our own has been the first to give the single tax a fair trial in a newly opened colony; I mean Kiantschou, in China.

Being an untried experiment, the naval authorities, under whose management this special colony is, did not risk taxing the whole unearned increment, but only one-third, besides 69 per cent. on the purchase value; but the land tax is professedly the *only* tax levied, everything else being absolutely free. The Secretary of the Navy openly declared in Parliament that this tax was meant to stop the land grabbers, and to put the colony on a sound foundation.

It must be a great satisfaction to all single tax men to hear such words from such a source. Speculation in ground values has unfortunately by the majority of the governing classes in the whole civilized world up to now been considered quite legitimate and even beneficial, so that it is quite refreshing to hear the opposite view publicly proclaimed by a responsible minister of state.

The retired minister of finance, too, Herr von Miguel, one of the most able men we have had for a long time, was fully alive to the truths of the Bodenreform, but he was too timid to risk his position by stepping forward with radical schemes. He wanted the proposals to come from below, in which case he would certainly have been with us.

There seems to be no doubt that even the Kaiser is well acquainted with Bodenreform principles, or else such a thing as the land act of Kiantschou would not have been possible. Some people even attribute this bold step to his personal initiative. But whether this be so or not, the movement in Germany is advancing. The world-wide triumph of our principles is at hand. Germany may be the first to apply them within the Empire, as she has been the first to apply them in the matter of her dependencies.

Holstein, Germany,

June 5, 1901.

(Kansas City *Star*.)

If Henry George could only have lived to see the time when the great State of Colorado was seriously contemplating the adoption of a tax on land values he would probably have been willing, as was the just and devout Simeon, to depart in peace.

Tom L. Johnson.

FRANCES M. MILNE, in *San Francisco Star*.

The curse of gold has passed thee by,
And left thy being pure and high,
Above the festering plague that drains
Life's generous current from the veins,
And leaves the heart a shriveled thing,
And breaks the spirit's plumed wing.